



St Helena - 9 nights - Whale Shark Week 2021 at the Mantis Hotel



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Johannesburg - St Helena

10 Days / 9 Nights

Date of Issue: 10 July 2020



[Click here to view your Digital Itinerary](#)

Introduction

On St Helena, you will be escorted by pro-UW photographer and marine conservationist Christopher Bartlett and Ines Moosmann, a London-qualified yoga teacher and diver.

Christopher has been involved in whale shark conservation since 2009. He has led trips to the Galapagos and the Maldives with Dr Simon Pierce, founder of the Marine Megafauna Foundation, adviser to the IUCN on whale shark conservation status, and regarded by his peers as the leading whale shark researcher in the world. Christopher brings a decade of fascination with these gentle giants to the show. Bigspottyfish (and their friends the bigflappyfish) are very close to our hearts, and the MMF is one of the key conservation organisations that we sponsor each year.

Start	Accommodation	Destination	Basis	Duration
Day 1	Safari Club SA	Johannesburg	B&B	1 Night
Day 2	Mantis St. Helena	St Helena	B&B	7 Nights
Day 9	Safari Club SA	Johannesburg	B&B	1 Night

Key

B&B: Bed and Breakfast

FB: Full Board - Dinner, Bed, Breakfast and Lunch

Price

February 19th to 28th 2021

In GBP

Two sharing a double room £1695 (approx. \$2370 USD)

Single occupancy. £2195 (approx. \$3095 USD)

Included

1 night in Johannesburg, 7 nights on St Helena, 1 night in Johannesburg, 10 dives over 5 days, 2 whale shark snorkelling trips, a full day 4x4 land tour, 6 days shared vehicle hire, and transfers. Includes 2 breakfasts in Johannesburg, 7 breakfasts and 4 dinners on St Helena.

Excluded

Intercontinental flights, international flights (from £600 GBP through us), 2 dinners in Johannesburg, 3 dinners and 7 lunches on St Helena, visas, travel insurance, tips.

Day 1: Safari Club SA, Johannesburg

Johannesburg

Johannesburg is one of Africa's biggest and most vibrant cities. It is the economic capital of Africa and the gateway to Southern Africa. Although not as famous as other South African destinations, there is plenty to do in Johannesburg

and nearby Pretoria. The old city is a multi-cultural mixture of traditional medicine shops, Chinese restaurants, taxi ranks and ultra-modern skyscrapers. There are excellent museums, art galleries and organised tours of historical and political interest. The shopping is Southern Africa's best and the many restaurants cater for all tastes. The nearby township of Soweto is Johannesburg's most popular tourist attraction.

Overnight: Safari Club SA

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We have meticulously chosen and prepared every aspect of the Safari Club to honour the very best of the African continent.

Our grounds perfectly reflect the space and freedom that Africa offers. With perfectly manicured lawns, swimming pool, pub and braai (BBQ) area, the Safari Club offers everything you could ever need in the most tranquil of settings.

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We have a small exercise room now with some equipment for guests who want to do some exercise. We have yoga mats, yoga balls, weights, restriction elastics, skipping ropes and will be getting a bicycle shortly.



Basis

Bed and Breakfast

Day 2: Mantis St. Helena, St Helena

St Helena

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The island boasts some extraordinarily scenic, untouched landscapes ranging from dramatic cliffs and towering sand dunes to the lush green hills of the sub-tropical interior, all of it is surrounded by pristine beaches and glistening ocean where dolphins and whales are often spotted. Visitors will be blessed with world-class opportunities for a variety of outdoor activities including hiking, ornithology, marine trips, diving and fishing.

What looks like a microscopic, insignificant dot on a map, is in fact 122 km-squared of fascinating history, endemic birds and fish, and the only place in the world where male and female adult whale sharks are seen in equal numbers during an annual aggregation between January and March. Coupled with regular sightings of pregnant females, this has led to recent speculation that the island may be the specie's hitherto unfound breeding ground. Other than the Galapagos, it is the only place to our knowledge where you can frequently encounter adult whale sharks on scuba. The biggest we have seen so far was a 13-metre mamma-to-be. Multiple encounters on a dive are not uncommon, and on snorkel trips seeing a dozen or more happens regularly in peak season.

St Helena's scenery is spectacular. From the clear Atlantic waters past sheer cliffs and breath-taking rock formations, through arid red desert dotted with cacti, rolling green fields and flax-covered hillsides to a pinnacle of prehistoric cloud forest.

Probably best known as Napoleon's last place of incarceration, albeit it in the luxuriously appointed Longwood House, and death, the island has a rich history as a key revittalling station in the middle of Atlantic. In the heyday of the East India Company and the British Empire, this fertile, volcanic island had a 3,000-strong garrison to defend it and serviced over 1000 ships a year. The island has two large forts, a castle, and a plethora of batteries and defensive positions to visit.

However, this history is not only on land. In the harbour, the wreck of the 100-metre-long SS Papanui, sunk after she caught fire in 1911 on her way to Peru, is excellent for diving and snorkelling. Slightly further out, the 142-metre long RFA Darkdale, 47 metres deep, lost to a U-boat in 1941, is great for technical diving.

The limestone cliffs on the leeward side of the island host some beautiful caverns, also packed with fish, many of which are endemic, and make for superb photo opportunities. Lava fingers running into the sea attract Chilean devil rays and pinnacle sites are home to schools of Rainbow runner and jacks.

Humpback whales cruise by in winter, and three species of dolphin (Bottlenose, Spotted pantropical, and Rough-toothed) are resident year-round. We organise combined dolphin and bird-watching trips, where we get close to Black noddies, brown noddies, Red-billed tropicbirds, fairy and sooty terns, petrels, brown and masked boobies and the occasional Pomarine skua. Bird enthusiasts also get excited about the abundance of elsewhere-rare Java sparrows, and the island's endemic St. Helena plover, known as the wirebird, and the island's own moorhen.

For the energetic, there are 22 "post box walks" to the prominent viewpoints. At the summit of each, there is a stamp to prove you made the hike. There are also a dozen short walks that take around an hour each, from different points around the island. If that sounds too strenuous, we organise guided 4x4 tours around the island too. If all that isn't enough, there is a quirky nine-hole golf course.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=89&v=1cdxqbPvRUc

Day Itinerary

Return to the airport for the 0900 flight to St Helena, arriving 1330 local time. After clearing immigration, you will be transferred to your accommodation. Dinner is included. After-dinner drinks at the Standard pub recommended for a bit of local colour and music.

Expert Tips

Dinner is included tonight

Overnight: Mantis St. Helena

There are few undiscovered destinations left in the world, and until recently, the British Territory of St Helena was one of them. The opening of St Helena's airport and the advent of commercial flights has reduced journey times from days to mere hours, making it easier for you, the discerning traveller, to experience this extraordinary island.

Mantis St Helena is located in Jamestown, the island's capital. The 30-bedroom boutique hotel is set in the original East India Company's officers' barracks built in 1774 and boasts a large restaurant, cocktail bar, guest lounge and two spacious outdoor terraces. Luxurious Heritage Suites and newly built Contemporary Rooms have set a new accommodation standard on the island.

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Basis

Bed and Breakfast

Day 3: Mantis St. Helena, St Helena

Day Itinerary

Dinner is included

Activities

Today we will do two dives, targeting sites frequented by whale sharks.

Afternoon visit of Jamestown.

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BasisBed and Breakfast

Day 4: Mantis St. Helena, St Helena

Activities

Full day island 4x4 tour to visit the key historic sites and viewpoints of the island.

BasisBed and Breakfast

Day 5: Mantis St. Helena, St Helena

Activities

Two reef or wreck dives in the morning, whale shark snorkelling in the afternoon.

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Basis

Bed and Breakfast

Day 6: Mantis St. Helena, St Helena

Day Itinerary

Dinner included

Activities

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Basis

Bed and Breakfast

Day 7: Mantis St. Helena, St Helena

Activities

Two dives, targeting sites frequented by whale sharks.

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Basis

Bed and Breakfast

Day 8: Mantis St. Helena, St Helena

Day Itinerary

Dinner included

Activities

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Basis

Bed and Breakfast

Day 9: Safari Club SA, Johannesburg

Johannesburg

As previously described

Day Itinerary

Morning free, transfer to the airport at midday for the 1430 flight to Johannesburg. Transfer to Johannesburg accommodation. Dinner at your cost.

Overnight: Safari Club SA

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Basis

Bed and Breakfast

Day 10: End of Itinerary

Basis

Full Board - Dinner, Bed, Breakfast and Lunch

Transport

Flight Information

Date	Flight	Airline	Departure Airport	Time	Arrival Airport	Time	Class	Ref
	SA8131 (Scheduled)	Airlink	OR Tambo International Airport [JNB]	09:00	Saint Helena Airport [HLE]	13:15		
	SA8132 (Scheduled)	Airlink	Saint Helena Airport [HLE]	14:30	OR Tambo International Airport [JNB]	21:15		

Transfers

Date	Company	Pick Up	Drop Off	Time	Vehicle
		OR Tambo International Airport [JNB]	Safari Club SA		Transfer
	Safari Club SA		OR Tambo International Airport [JNB]		Transfer
		Saint Helena Airport [HLE]	Mantis St. Helena		Transfer
		Mantis St. Helena	Saint Helena Airport [HLE]		Transfer
		OR Tambo International Airport [JNB]	Safari Club SA		Transfer
	Safari Club SA		OR Tambo International Airport [JNB]		Transfer
